BRITISH COLUMBIA
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BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 08-08 February 22, 2008

- **BC's inflation rate falls to 0.8% in January, a six-year low**
- **Retail sales increase 1.1% in December; up 7.1% for 2007**
- **Room revenues advance 1.6% in October**

Prices

- **British Columbia's inflation rate fell to a six-year-low of 0.8% in January.** The year-over-year increase in the all-items Consumer Price Index (CPI) was less than half the national average (2.2%) and well below the rates recorded in the rest of Canada. Manitoba (1.6%), which had the second-lowest inflation rate in the country, saw prices increase twice as much as in BC.

  Energy costs (+2.2%) continued to push prices up in BC, but the overall effect was relatively modest. Excluding energy, the provincial inflation rate was 0.7%.

  Homeowner insurance (+3.1%) and fuel oil (+7.5%) helped drive up shelter costs (+2.5%) in January. The price of food advanced 0.7% as groceries (+0.7%) and restaurant meals (+0.6%) became more expensive. The rising price of gasoline (+6.1%) contributed to a 1.1% increase in the transportation index, and may also have been a factor in higher public transportation fares (+3.2%). Alcoholic beverages & tobacco products (+0.8%) and recreation, education & reading materials (+0.3%) also took a bigger bite out of the household budget. However, clothing & footwear (-3.0%), household operations, furnishings & equipment (-0.5%), and health & personal care products & services (-0.2%) were less expensive than they were 12 months earlier.

  In Vancouver, consumers faced a 1.1% overall price increase, while the inflation rate in Victoria (+0.3%) was below the provincial average.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Nationally, the all-items CPI increased 2.2% from January 2007 to January 2008, fuelled by a surge in the price of gasoline (+20.9%).** The other main upward contributors to Canada's CPI were mortgage interest (+7.6%), homeowner's replacement (+4.5%) and fuel oil (+24.7%) costs. At the provincial level, Alberta (+3.6%), Saskatchewan (+3.2%) and Nova Scotia (+3.1%) experienced the highest inflation rates in January. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Retailers in BC ended the year on a high note, as sales increased 1.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in December.** Sales at gasoline stations and pharmacies & personal care stores were strong enough to push past weaker numbers recorded at supermarkets and specialized building material & garden stores. Nationally, retail sales rose 0.6% as large gains were made in the automotive sector. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale sales in the province were down 7.5% (*seasonally adjusted*) to $4.2 billion in December, their lowest level since November 2006.** Weaker demand for building materials, machinery & electronic equipment, and automotive products contributed to the decline. Nationally, sales decreased in all provinces except New Brunswick (+1.7%), pulling the national average into negative territory (-2.9%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

Tourism

- **Provincial room revenues advanced (+1.6%, *seasonally adjusted*) for the third consecutive month in October.** Most regions experienced gains, including Cariboo (+8.2%), Kootenay (+3.5%), Mainland/Southwest (+2.9%), Nechako (+1.9%) and North Coast (+1.0%). Growth in Thompson/Okanagan (+0.1%) was relatively flat, while Northeast (-3.7%) and

Report **Mother Tongue and Home Language**

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As the RRSP deadline draws near, Canadians say that money (69%) and health (60%) are two major factors when timing their own retirement. *Ipsos Reid*

Vancouver Island/Coast (-1.5%) saw a drop in receipts.

Hotel revenues were higher (+1.8%) in October, as large (151-250 rooms; +3.8%) and very large (251+ rooms; +1.7%) hotels posted gains. Motels (+1.8%) also had a more lucrative month following a decrease in revenues in September. However, other accommodations, including vacation rentals and fishing lodges, recorded a 2.2% decline. *Data Source: BC Stats*

- **The number of international travellers entering Canada via BC fell (-1.4%, *seasonally adjusted*) in December.** There was a drop (-2.4%) in the number of US entries for the second straight month, as fewer same-day (-3.8%) and overnight (-1.8%) trips by Americans were recorded. However, overseas entries increased (+2.0%) as a result of an influx of visitors from Europe (+6.1%) and Oceania (+3.2%). Entries from Asia (-0.1%) were relatively unchanged from November. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

2007 in Review

- **Retail sales in the province increased 7.1% in 2007, the largest annual increase since 1995, with nearly every kind of business showing stronger sales.** Home centres & hardware stores (+16.4%), home electronics & appliance stores (+11.0%) and gasoline stations (+10.6%) all saw double-digit gains for the year, as did beer, wine & liquor (+10.5%) and computer & software stores (+10.0%). Only convenience & specialty food stores (-1.2%) posted a decline, as sales flagged for the second year in row. Nationally, annual retail sales were up 5.8% with retail activity increasing in all provinces, especially in Saskatchewan (+12.9%) which recorded the highest growth rate in the country. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesalers in BC saw a 5.0% increase in sales in 2007.** Wholesalers of pharmaceuticals (+21.6%), metal products (+20.4%) and home & personal goods (+19.5%) made the greatest gains with each reporting a roughly twenty percent increase in sales. Alcohol & tobacco (+11.7%), machinery & equipment (+11.5%), motor vehicle parts & accessories (+10.4%) and building supplies (+10.0%) also posted substantial increases. Wholesalers of motor vehicles (-5.7%), on the other hand, did not fare as well, as sales slumped through 2007. Nationally, wholesale sales rose 4.7% with every province posting increases. Saskatchewan led the way with a 13.8% increase. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Total travel to BC from abroad decreased 3.9% in 2007, the third straight year in which visitor entries have fallen.** Steadily declining since 2001, and accounting for more than three-quarters of all visitors to the province, American entries to BC fell 5.9% likely as a result of the combined pressures of a stronger Canadian dollar and continued uncertainty regarding economic conditions south of the border. The number of same-day entries dropped 12.1% in 2007 while overnight stays slumped 2.4%.

  Contrarily, the number of overseas entries to BC increased 3.3% in 2007. While the number of visitors from Asia decreased 2.5%, there were more travellers from Europe (+5.3%) and Oceania (+13.4%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

Crime

- **In 2006, there were a reported 497 firearm-related violent crimes in BC, representing a rate of 33.9 victims per 100,000 population.** Among the provinces, only Manitoba (37.7 per 100,000 population) and Saskatchewan (38.5) showed higher rates of firearm-related violent victimizations. The lowest rates were in Atlantic Canada, including Newfoundland & Labrador (11.4), Prince Edward Island (12.3) and New Brunswick (15.6). Nationally, there were 8,105 victims or 27.5 per 100,000 population, with robbery (49%) and assault (29%) accounting for about three-quarters of the total number of firearm-related violent crimes. *Data Source: SC Cat. # 85-002-XIE, Vol. 28, no. 2*

For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Contact: Edelgard Panzenboeck
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2006 Census Fast Facts Issue 2006-04

Mother Tongue and Home Language

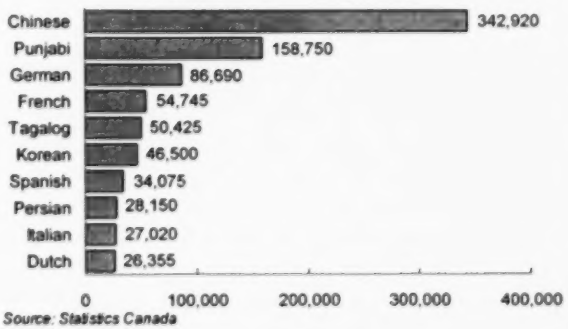
Mother Tongue

Mother tongue is the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census.

Including English and French, 146 languages were tabulated for mother tongues in the 2006 Census. Just over 71% (2,875,770 British Columbians) reported English as their sole mother tongue (single response), a drop from 75% in 2001, while 1.4% of the province's population reported French as their only mother tongue. Nationally, 58% of Canadians reported English and 22% reported French as their mother tongue.

In British Columbia, more than one-quarter (27%) of the population listed a non-official language as their only mother tongue, with Chinese dialects the most common at 8.5% (up from 8.0% in 2001). A distant second is Punjabi at 3.9%, followed by German at 2.2%. In addition, 1.3% of the province's population (over 52,000 people) reported more than one mother tongue (multiple responses). For Canada as a whole, 20% reported a non-official language as their only mother tongue and 1.3% (nearly 400,000 people) reported more than one mother tongue.

Top 10 Non-English Mother Tongues in BC
(single response, number of persons)



Source: Statistics Canada

Knowledge of Official Languages

Fully 97% of all British Columbians reported knowing at least one of our official languages, with 90% knowing English only, 7% knowing both English and French and very few (0.1%) knowing French only. Among those whose mother tongue was a non-official language, 89% reported knowledge of English or French, with 4.5% knowing both English and French. The highest percentages reporting knowledge of neither English nor French occurred among those with a mother tongue of a Chinese language (19.6%), Punjabi (18.2%), Vietnamese (14.5%) and Korean (12.8%). In contrast, only 1.3% of those reporting a mother tongue of Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino) had no knowledge of either official language. Nationally, over 98% of Canadians reported knowledge of at least one of our official languages.

Home Language

Home language refers to the language spoken most often or on a regular basis at home by the individual at the time of the census.

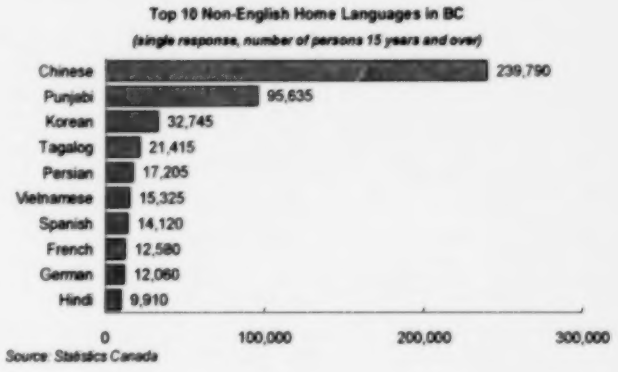
Canada is culturally diverse and nowhere is this more evident than in BC. In 2006, 83% of British Columbians 15 years and over reported English as their sole home language (single response). While BC's share of Canada's population stood at just over 13%, its share of the national population reporting a non-official home language was 16.5%, the highest among the provinces, followed closely by Ontario (16.1%). Only Nunavut had a higher percentage (52.4%), with more than half (51.9%) of its population speaking an Aboriginal language most often at home. While 12,580 British Columbians spoke French most often at home, this represented less than 1%. Nationally, 66.5% of Canadians

15 years and over spoke English, 21.9% spoke French and 11.6% spoke a non-official language at home.

Among the population aged 15 and over, a Chinese dialect and Punjabi were the top two non-official languages spoken most often at home in both British Columbia and Canada in terms of population size. However, there were considerable differences among the balance of the top home languages between the two. In terms of percent share, BC had a disproportionately high share of the national population with home languages of Punjabi (43%), Korean (38%), Chinese (34%) and Hindi (28%). Interestingly, of the more than 16,000 Canadians reporting Japanese as their home language, British Columbia was home to more than half (53%). BC also had high percentages of the nation's population with a Scandinavian home language (although the numbers of people are relatively small), such as Swedish (34%), Danish (33%) and Norwegian (30%). Other home languages of which BC had a high proportion of the country's population are Malay (36%) and Thai (35%).

While 98% of BC's population aged 15 and over reported a single home language, the remaining 2% (61,165 people) reported multiple home languages, with the majority (57,640 people) reporting English and a non-official language.

For Canada as a whole, the picture was similar, with 2% of the population aged 15 and over (453,005 people) reporting multiple home languages, with English and a non-official language in the majority (322,395 people).



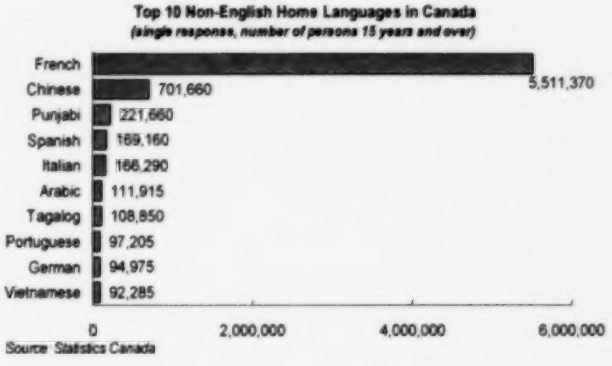


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Table 1: Top 50 Mother Tongue Languages (Single Response) in BC by Knowledge of Official Languages, 2006

Mother Tongue	Total Population	Knowledge of Official Languages				
		English only	French only	English & French	Neither English nor French	
					Number	Per Cent
Total Mother Tongue	4,074,385	3,653,365	2,070	295,645	123,305	3.0
Single Responses	4,022,045	3,610,165	1,985	287,115	122,770	3.1
English	2,875,770	2,685,530	45	188,755	1,440	0.1
French	54,745	4,435	1,350	48,940	25	0.0
Non-Official languages	1,091,530	920,205	585	49,420	121,310	11.1
Chinese languages	342,920	267,475	90	8,015	67,340	19.6
Cantonese	*131,245*					
*Chinese, n.o.s. **	*129,560*					
Mandarin	*72,155*					
Taiwanese	*5,750*					
Fukien	*1,725*					
Hakka	*1,075*					
Shanghainese	*940*					
Chaochow (Teochow)	*460*					
Panjabi (Punjabi)	158,750	126,325	60	3,465	28,895	18.2
German	86,690	79,040	15	6,765	875	1.0
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	50,425	49,170	10	555	680	1.3
Korean	46,500	39,400	20	1,110	5,970	12.8
Spanish	34,075	28,410	70	3,960	1,635	4.8
Persian (Farsi)	28,150	24,030	30	2,010	2,075	7.4
Italian	27,020	23,655	25	2,715	625	2.3
Dutch	26,355	23,575	10	2,595	170	0.6
Vietnamese	24,560	19,980	40	975	3,560	14.5
Hindi	23,240	21,630	-	545	1,065	4.6
Japanese	20,040	18,425	-	425	1,180	5.9
Russian	19,320	17,490	10	935	890	4.6
Polish	17,565	15,575	-	1,505	475	2.7
Portuguese	14,385	12,535	-	1,135	710	4.9
Aboriginal languages	13,075	12,645	85	255	85	0.7
Ukrainian	12,285	11,625	-	560	100	0.8
Hungarian	10,670	9,690	-	800	180	1.7
Croatian	8,565	7,930	-	480	155	1.8
Arabic	8,440	6,565	30	1,490	355	4.2
Urdu	7,025	6,195	-	330	495	7.0
Danish	6,720	6,320	-	400	-	-
Greek	6,670	5,995	-	505	170	2.5
Gujarati	6,565	5,835	25	340	365	5.6
Romanian	6,335	4,395	10	1,675	255	4.0
Serbian	6,180	5,175	-	620	385	6.2
Czech	6,000	5,485	-	485	30	0.5
Finnish	4,770	4,525	-	200	40	0.8
Slovak	3,490	3,255	-	165	60	1.7
Norwegian	3,275	3,090	-	185	-	-
Tamil	3,200	2,875	-	115	210	6.6
Malay	3,100	2,975	-	25	105	3.4
Ilocano	3,100	3,005	-	40	55	1.8
Swedish	2,875	2,635	-	235	10	0.3
Turkish	2,255	1,960	-	190	100	4.4
Thai	1,830	1,745	-	25	60	3.3
Serbo-Croatian	1,740	1,595	-	90	55	3.2
Bengali	1,685	1,525	-	100	65	3.9
Sindhi	1,670	1,570	-	50	45	2.7
Hebrew	1,615	1,400	-	175	30	1.9
Bulgarian	1,605	1,325	-	240	40	2.5
Slovenian	1,510	1,430	-	75	-	-
Bosnian	1,510	1,310	-	140	65	4.3
Khmer (Cambodian)	1,430	1,205	10	50	170	11.9
Amharic	1,280	1,205	-	50	25	2.0
Estonian	1,155	1,000	-	150	10	0.9
Sinhala (Sinhalese)	1,100	1,060	-	10	30	2.7
Kurdish	1,095	980	-	20	100	9.1
Multiple responses	52,335	43,200	85	8,525	530	1.0
English & French	5,920	1,610	20	4,290	-	-
English and NOL**	43,785	40,570	35	2,685	495	1.1
French and NOL**	1,840	795	25	980	30	1.6
Eng., Fr. & NOL**	790	225	-	570	-	-

** Chinese, n.o.s. includes responses of "Chinese", as well as other Chinese languages not otherwise specified.*

**NOL - *Non-Official Language*

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Table 97-555-XCB2006015.ivt

Prepared by: BC Stats, January 2008

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Table 2: Top Languages Spoken Most Often at Home for the Population 15 Years and Over, 2006
(Sorted in descending order on BC)

Home Language	British Columbia	BC as a % of Canada	Canada	Alberta	Saskat-chewan	Manitoba	Ontario
Total Population 15 Years and Over	3,394,905	13.2	25,664,220	2,625,140	766,235	908,450	9,819,420
Single responses	3,333,745	13.2	25,211,215	2,589,105	760,935	894,165	9,606,355
English	2,772,180	16.5	16,776,840	2,329,320	721,915	791,175	7,826,375
French	12,580	0.2	5,511,370	16,245	3,225	16,180	235,845
Non-official languages (number)	548,980	18.8	2,923,010	243,540	35,795	86,810	1,544,140
Non-official languages (per cent)	16.5		11.6	9.4	4.7	9.7	16.1
Chinese languages	239,790	34.2	701,660	63,075	4,360	7,120	339,245
Panjabi (Punjabi)	95,635	43.1	221,660	21,700	435	3,635	93,160
Korean	32,745	38.4	85,360	6,855	325	1,275	40,715
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	21,415	19.7	108,850	13,350	670	11,335	55,765
Persian (Farsi)	17,205	21.4	80,335	4,415	355	900	48,210
Vietnamese	15,325	16.6	92,285	11,690	955	1,770	44,300
Spanish	14,120	8.3	169,160	12,915	1,270	3,575	80,315
German	12,060	12.7	94,975	21,725	5,795	18,595	31,390
Hindi	9,910	27.7	35,730	4,075	140	490	19,545
Russian	8,710	10.9	80,080	5,355	220	1,745	51,110
Japanese	8,705	53.2	16,370	1,780	125	250	4,760
Multiple responses	61,165	13.5	453,005	36,040	5,300	14,285	213,065
English and French	2,795	3.8	73,175	2,635	670	1,405	19,725
English and non-official language	57,640	17.9	322,395	32,745	4,570	12,700	188,555
French and non-official language	390	0.9	44,715	390	45	95	2,440
English, French & non-official lang.	345	2.7	12,720	265	10	80	2,340

Home Language	Quebec	Newfound-land & Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Yukon Territory	Northwest Territories	Nunavut
Total Population 15 Years and Over	6,184,490	422,385	110,205	756,595	601,420	24,490	31,135	19,340
Single responses	6,069,980	421,825	109,940	753,770	597,005	24,350	30,940	19,110
English	616,310	417,410	106,760	726,000	409,725	23,145	27,605	8,925
French	5,028,540	565	2,265	14,765	180,235	405	350	170
Non-official languages (number)	425,130	3,850	910	13,000	7,045	795	2,980	10,020
Non-official languages (per cent)	7.0	0.9	0.8	1.7	1.2	3.3	9.6	52.4
Chinese languages	43,820	630	135	1,695	1,530	125	125	20
Panjabi (Punjabi)	6,860	40	-	130	10	55	10	10
Korean	2,500	-	15	575	350	-	-	-
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	5,905	-	-	30	85	50	220	20
Persian (Farsi)	8,455	45	20	425	290	-	10	-
Vietnamese	17,465	10	-	345	115	80	225	10
Spanish	55,670	325	55	410	430	60	15	-
German	3,415	115	35	1,310	330	190	10	-
Hindi	1,315	35	15	85	115	-	-	-
Russian	12,395	130	-	245	145	20	-	-
Japanese	525	10	40	115	40	15	-	-
Multiple responses	114,515	560	265	2,825	4,415	140	195	225
English and French	41,100	150	120	945	3,535	50	20	10
English and non-official language	22,635	415	140	1,790	750	80	165	200
French and non-official language	41,150	-	-	70	115	-	-	20
English, French & non-official lang.	9,630	-	-	20	15	-	-	-

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, Table 97-555-XCB2006039.ivt Page 4 of 4 Prepared by: BC Stats, January 2008

See our Website for more detailed home language data tables: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/facts/facts.asp

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HW

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Canada

Infoline

February 22, 2008
Issue 08-08

Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/07	% change on one year ago
BC	4,402.9	1.5
Canada	33,091.2	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2006	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	180,328	6.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	158,335	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)*	36,649	1.9
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	23,996	5.0
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Dec	3,395	-0.9
Merchandise Exports - Dec	2,238	-8.8
Retail Sales - Dec	4,818	1.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Jan 2008)		
BC	0.8	Annual 1.8
Vancouver	1.1	average 2.0
Victoria	0.3	from 1.2
Canada	2.2	Stats Can 2.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jan '08	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,403	0.4
Employed - BC	2,305	0.5
Unemployed - BC	98	-2.9
		Dec '07
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.1	4.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	5.8	6.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Feb 20/08	Feb 21/07
Prime Business Rate	5.75	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	7.25	6.50
- 5 year	7.29	6.65
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Feb 20/08	Feb 21/07
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0190	1.1612
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9872	0.8619
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jan '08	one year ago
BC	771.68	3.8
Canada	770.02	5.1

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

High Technology - 2007

Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector - 2007 Edition

This publication highlights conditions affecting the province's high technology sector from a supply-side perspective by tracking 37 business and economic climate indicators for BC, with comparisons to other provinces.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech.asp#HTpubs

Topic Tables – 2006 Census

What are the top languages spoken at home in your community? Where were a community's immigrants born? A different approach.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/topics/topics.asp

2007 Municipal Populations

Total population for municipalities and Regional Districts for July 1, 2007, as well as revised figures for 2002 to 2006, are now online.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/estspop.asp

Area Profiles

There is a new link in the **RESOURCES** tab found at the bottom of our left sidebar. This page acts as a gateway to all our area profile products. Each profile paints a statistical picture of an area using maps, charts, tables, rankings, comparisons, and more. Eight thousand individual files are available now.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/dd/profiles.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, January 2008
- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 4th Quarter 2007

Next week

- Business Indicators, February 2008
- Current Statistics, February 2008

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